

Reflections of a Tragic Hero

by Shoshiel

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Summary: Tobias reflects on his life. Dark. Very, very dark.

Reflections of a Tragic Hero

Every author has a story that they look back on and say "Uh-huh. I should be locked up in a nut house and be taking happy pills." Need I say more?

_I was a wayward child With the weight of the world That I held deep inside Life was a winding road And I learned many things Little ones shouldn't know _

_ But I closed my eyes Steadied my feet on the ground Raised my head to the sky And though time's rolled by Still I feel like that child As I look at the moon Maybe I grew up A little too soon_

My name is Tobias. And I am about to die. I purposely write my opening the same as Prince Elfangor-Sirinial-Shamtul for a reason. I am his son. But it is not a physical death that I talk about. An emotional one, that is. The one person, the only person I have really, truly loved, that I have been in love with, is gone. Rachel was caught by Visser Three. I have not seen her as a Controller, but it is unmistakable what she saw the alternative as. The thing we had always said was better than being a Controller, a slave. Death was the only alternative for Rachel. I can still hear Visser Three's laugh of triumph in scorning us on her death. < You will die as your fellow warrior died. I will kill you and the Taxxons will taste more Andalite blood.> Then he laughed. That evil, crazy, laugh. The same laugh that we all heard when he murdered Elfangor, my father. That laugh of glory will accompany me in my sleep the rest of my existence.

It is nearly two months since I found my father's hirac delest, his final statement. The tiny disk I discovered flying over the construction site where my life changed. For the better or for the worse is still unrevealed to me. In writing this, I hope to discover

the answer, or for someone, anyone who will listen, to tell me. I had to morph to human form to write this all down. The tears are streaming silently down my face as bitter rivers. This is one of the reminders that I am still part human. But only part. That also is reminded to me as the two hour limit creeps up. Then the tears must stop, because hawks don't cry.

I have never really had a family. I would be considered an orphan almost. My aunt and uncle never paid attention to me. Unless, of course, they thought I was misbehaving. Then screaming at me and punishing me became the most important thing in the world. Elfangor told me at the construction site to go to my friends. They were now my family. I guess he was right. It's just, the only person I could really talk to, I mean really, was Rachel. Now Rachel's gone. Now who do I talk to? Now what? You gave me someone to give me strength, but now what?! She's gone, dead. Oh God. Rachel's gone forever. And forever is a hell of a long time.

Damn them all. Damn the Ellimist. You brought my father to Earth, only to take him back before I was even born. You regave me hands, but limited ones that must disappear again after a short amount of time. Damn you. Damn the Yeerks. You're the reason Rachel died. You're the reason all my friends have become so old in a matter of years. The reason I have become such a tragic hero. Damn you. Damn Visser Three. Especially Visser Three. You killed and destroyed everything important to me. My father, my home, Rachel, my hope, my soul. Damn you most of all. If I ever got the chance I'd...I'd...oh God. Damn you all.

My heart is pounding. My life has become a mad house, a loony bin, insane as Marco has put it countless times. I hunch over and grab my knees, resting my head on them. I listen to the wildlife surrounding me in my meadow. The animals are oblivious to my pain. They chatter and tweet. This seems like such a peaceful forest. You would not even believe that numerous battles have gone on here. Not in this forest, you would think. Not in this meadow. In my meadow. Mine. My territory. That sounds like something a bully would say. But I'm not a bully. Just a person trying to stay alive. Yeah right. Person. I'm a bird. That's what I'll be for the rest of my time. I have to kill to eat. I have to murder helpless animals to stay alive. That's what I can't stand. What a disgusting creature I have become. What a freak I am now. But how much longer is my time? How long is a red-tailed hawk's life span? Maybe not to much longer. Maybe I won't have to be in pain much more.

I wonder if anyone ever noticed I was gone. If anyone even cared. Probably not. I had no friends, no family. Fat chance of anyone noticing, let alone caring that I was missing. The one time someone actually did notice, it ended up almost costing all of our lives. Maybe it's better that way. I mean, that no one cared about my disappearance. It's just, I've always been the prey. Maybe if someone bothered to care about the confused kid, wandering the school hallways alone every day, I wouldn't be stuck in a body that's not my own. But then I might not have known about the invasion and all the things that I now know would be science fiction. I still wish someone had bothered to care, someone other than the Animorphs who know my secrets. God, everything's so freaking messed up.

My hair gets into my eyes. I brush it away with my hand. My hair has gotten so long. I wonder why. Whenever you remorph into an animal,

the DNA is the same as it was when you first acquired the animal. Why has my hair grown? Rachel would laugh at that. She would probably say "forget that, we need to do something about your hair," and drag me to a barber shop to get it cut. I laughed at the thought. She had always had the ability to make me laugh. Then she would start laughing as well. Rachel had the best laugh. Like a combination of all the most pleasant sounds in the world. It hurts me to think that I will never hear her laughter again. My life has been dragging along so slowly since she died. That's one of the costs of love. If they ever go away from your life, it's like there is a hole that's been blown into your head, stomach, and chest.

Sometimes I wonder whether it's enough. Whether I should just finish off the meaningless time that is my life. Before, there was Rachel that I fought alongside. Now, who is there? Now who do I fight for? The human race? I'm not even completely human. Only a third. I'm also hawk and Andalite. Why can't it just end. God, why can't I just be struck down right here? Why can't I just go to sleep and never wake up? I'm sure tired enough. My head is pounding and I feel so tired. I'm so tired, so exhausted. I should just let it end. Just let it end, my mind keeps telling me. My eyes slam shut on their own. I keep them closed for several seconds. I hear the sounds of the forest. They all turn into little voices saying "Let it all end." I slip farther and farther away from thought. Just let it all end.

I suddenly feel I sharp pain in my ankle. Probably just a weed. But I start to feel sick. Then I hear it. The deadly rattling sound coming from the sleek body of a snake. I have to morph. I didn't mean it. I can't die. I don't want to die. I'm getting weaker. Too weak to morph. It's taking all my energy just to move the pen. My vision is blurry. No. I can't just die. But I am. I've been attacked by so many creatures and aliens. It's funny that I am dying by a snake. Please let me live long enough to finish this. I have to get this all out before I die.

Good-bye Jake. I know that in the end you'll lead the remaining Animorphs to victory. Good-bye Cassie. You know that you still like animals more than people. Good-bye Marco. I hope you keep your good humor and bad jokes to the very end. And finally, good-bye Ax. You have your brother's, my father's spirit. Keep that with you always. I will miss you all. You were the only people I have ever known to be good. You have all been my shelter from the storm.

My breath is getting shorter. It's harder and harder to keep conscious. I'm really dying. I hope the others find this. I hope that they will realize that they did so much more than they needed to when they find my body free from life. They were the best and strongest people I have ever known, that I ever thought possible. At least I'm dying free. There are so many worse things. Believe me, I know.

To who ever is reading this, thanks. Thanks for taking the time to listen. This has turned out to be a physical death after all. Just, please, decide for me whether my life had changed for the better or for the worse. I still don't know. Maybe I'll never know. Just figure it out. You can tell me in heaven. I just hope that the first thing I see when I get there is Rachel.

End
file.